

Sex differences in health are so numerous. Osteoporosis is far more common in women—as is depression. While women have the ability to modulate our immunity to bear a child, it is ironic that we suffer far more autoimmune disease than men. For example, 9 of 10 lupus sufferers are women! Drugs and alcohol affect us differently from men as well even a woman's response to anesthesia is different than a man's. So one can see it is a critical problem when we fail to discover such differences. It compromises the quality of health care for more than half of all Americans!

Many of us have worked for years to achieve equal representation of women in health research. Since 1990 when the Society for Women's Health Research was founded, we have had a voice to help us in our effort to promote the inclusion of women in health care research, and to educate all of us about sex differences in health and disease. The Society is to be commended for its tireless efforts to increase our understanding of sex differences.

Today we know that equity does not yet exist in health care, and we have a long way to go. Progress has been made—we have seen an Office of Women's Health established at the NIH, and the research at the Institutes has reflected that representation. In fact, we see that not only women but also children and minorities are being better represented in health research today.

I introduced the Women's Health Office Act to help address the sex-based disparities in research and policy. This legislation provides permanent authorization for offices of women's health in five Federal agencies: the Department of Health and Human Services; the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality; the Health Resources and Services Administration; and the Food and Drug Administration. Currently, only two women's health offices in the Federal Government have statutory authorization: the Office of Research on Women's Health at the National Institutes of Health and the Office for Women's Services within the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

With some offices established, but not authorized, the needs of women could be compromised without the consent of Congress. We must create statutory authority for these offices, to ensure that health policy flows from fact, not assumption. Improving the health of American women requires a far greater understanding of women's health needs and conditions, and ongoing evaluation in the areas of research, education, prevention, treatment and the delivery of services and passage of this legislation will help ensure that.

I call on my colleagues to join me in supporting this legislation, which will ensure better health for our mothers, our sisters, our daughters, here and abroad.

Thank you, Mr. President.

NATIONAL HEPATITIS B AWARENESS WEEK

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize the week of May 9, 2005 as National Hepatitis B Awareness Week.

I thank Senator SANTORUM, who introduced this resolution with me, as well as Senators SPECTER, STABENOW, INOUE, and DURBIN who cosponsored it.

In the United States today, more than 1.25 million Americans are infected with hepatitis B. Chronic hepatitis B is often called a "silent disease" because more than two-thirds of patients infected with the disease have no symptoms or their symptoms go unrecognized.

Chronic hepatitis B infection is a potentially life threatening disease that may lead to cirrhosis of the liver, liver failure and liver cancer. More than half a million people worldwide die each year from primary liver cancer, and up to 80 percent of primary liver cancers are caused by chronic hepatitis B. In the United States, more than one million people have developed chronic hepatitis B infection and more than 5,000 Americans die from hepatitis B and hepatitis B-related liver complications each year.

Despite these alarming statistics, however, it is estimated that only a small percentage of chronic hepatitis B patients are currently receiving treatment for their disease. Approximately 15 to 40 percent of chronically infected hepatitis B patients will develop liver disease due to long-term exposure. Of chronic hepatitis B patients who develop cirrhosis, almost half of them may die within five years because of the high risk of liver cancer associated with the progression of the disease.

Upon closer examination of hepatitis B, researchers have found alarmingly disproportionate rates of infection among Asian Pacific Islanders and African Americans. In the U.S., as many as one out of ten Asian Pacific Islanders Americans are chronically infected with the hepatitis B virus.

California has initiated a number of programs to ensure that we are working to stop the transmission of Hepatitis B through vaccine programs and disease management programs intended to make living with the disease more comfortable.

I recognize the Association of Asian Pacific Community Health Organizations, AAPCHO, which is based in Oakland, CA, and the partners across the country with whom they are working to demystify and educate citizens about hepatitis B.

During National Hepatitis B Awareness Week, the "AIM for the B: Awareness, Involvement and Mobilization for Chronic Hepatitis B" campaign will consist of a series of local awareness forums and educational roundtables featuring doctors, patients and families and patient advocates. Two will be held in California—one in San Francisco and one in San Jose—in addition to

various other sites around the country to raise awareness and open the dialogue about chronic hepatitis B, prevention, disease management, and future advances.

It is my hope that National Hepatitis B Awareness Week will raise the profile of hepatitis B, facilitate open dialogue about what we can do in our families and communities to stop the transmission of this disease and arm ourselves with the knowledge to fight back against hepatitis B.

We possess the weapons to combat hepatitis B, including vaccination and treatment. For those infected, treatment options exist that are designed to stop the progression of liver disease and reduce liver damage. As we recognize National Hepatitis B Awareness Week, I encourage Americans who may be at risk for chronic hepatitis B to get tested for the disease, and physicians and patients to understand there is a large group of patients who do need treatment right now.

I ask my colleagues to join me in recognizing the great strides made in hepatitis B awareness and treatment and acknowledge the ongoing battle during National Hepatitis B Awareness Week.

IN MEMORY OF MIGUEL CONTRERAS

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I rise today to pay tribute to my friend and fellow Californian Miguel Contreras, secretary-treasurer of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO who died suddenly of a heart attack on Friday, May 6 at the age of 52.

Working families and the Latino community lost a great champion with the passing of Miguel Contreras.

As the son of migrant farmworkers Miguel also labored in the agriculture fields of California. Yet through his passion to ensure equity and fairness for workers, Miguel advanced to become one of the premier leaders in the local, State, and national labor movement.

As a young man Miguel worked with Cesar Chavez of the United Farm Workers Union to organize farm workers to secure improved working conditions and better wages.

In 1996, Miguel became the executive secretary-treasurer of the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO.

Under his leadership the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor grew to become a powerful voice for working men and women of Los Angeles County.

Miguel was the driving force behind the transformation of an organization that went from a union of 125,000 members to a multi-ethnic coalition of union workers now nearly 800,000 strong.

Through his leadership Miguel led a union-sponsored grass roots political drive that played a significant role in deciding the outcome of five Los Angeles congressional seats and countless state and local races.

Miguel tirelessly spent his life working to empower others, no matter their station in life.

While Miguel Contreras may be remembered most for his tenacity as a labor leader and role model for the Latino community, his efforts to secure a better future for American workers everywhere will live on.

My deepest sympathy goes out to his wife Maria Elena Durazo and their two sons, Michael and Mario.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, I am deeply saddened to inform you of the passing of Miguel Contreras, secretary-treasurer for the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO. I would like to take a few moments to recognize the many important accomplishments of Miguel Contreras and the tremendous impact he made on the labor movement.

Miguel led the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor for nearly a decade. During his tenure, he continuously fought for the rights of laborers, and did so with great success. Through his guidance and leadership, The Los Angeles County Federation of Labor entered a period of unprecedented advancement and success.

Miguel Contreras was a man with humble beginnings. The son of farm workers, he began working in the fields of California's Central Valley at a very young age. With his early exposure to the difficult life of a farm worker, he quickly joined the ranks of political activists in labor as a volunteer with the United Farm Workers of America. He stood with Cesar Chavez and the UFW during their national grape boycott, and continued the fight for workers for the remaining years of his life.

In 1996, Miguel Contreras became the first Latino to win the post of secretary-treasurer for the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO—comprising 350 local unions and more than 800,000 members. Under his leadership, The Los Angeles County Federation of Labor had seen phenomenal growth. He coordinated many successful labor rights victories including the labor dispute of 2000 when 8,500 janitors from Service Employees International Union, SEIU, Local 1877 fought for and won a higher standard of living and better working conditions.

Fighting for the rights of laborers was at the core of Miguel Contreras' beliefs, an attribute which made him a great leader for laborers throughout the State of California. He cared about regular people and timelessly worked for their welfare.

I invite all of my colleagues to join me and the many mourning members of the labor community in recognizing and honoring Miguel Contreras for his guidance and life-long effort in fighting to improve the lives of laborers. He is survived by his wife Maria Elena Durazo and two sons, Michael and Mario.

RECOGNIZING LISA GUILLERMIN GABLE

Mr. ALLEN. Mr. President, I am pleased today to recognize and thank Ambassador Lisa Guillermin Gable of Virginia for her valued leadership as the United States Commissioner General to the 2005 World Exposition in Aichi, Japan.

The World Expo 2005 features national pavilions from 125 participating countries. Under the leadership of Ambassador Gable, the not-for-profit and privately funded organization, Aichi USA 2005, has successfully designed and built the U.S. Pavilion, which will be open to the public in Nagoya, Japan, through September 25, 2005. The showcase at the United States' pavilion honors America's first diplomat and innovator, Benjamin Franklin. The pavilion showcase promotes America's core values of hope, optimism, enterprise and freedom.

Under Ambassador Gable's stewardship, the U.S. Pavilion and related cultural activities were successfully and fully funded with 100 percent non-Federal financing. The hard work of this distinguished resident of the Commonwealth of Virginia will help promote U.S. economic development by fostering business relationships between Japan and the many participating countries and state sponsors.

I express my appreciation and thanks to Ambassador Lisa Guillermin Gable, U.S. Commissioner General to the World Expo, as named by President George W. Bush, for leading the way in making possible the United States' participation in the first world's fair of the 21st Century.

26 YEARS OF DEDICATED FEDERAL SERVICE

Mr. CRAPO. Mr. President, as Members of Congress, we have the unique opportunity to participate in special exchange programs in which talented individuals from other branches of government can work temporarily in our offices as legislative fellows or detailees. These initiatives promote efficiency in the business of government by developing mutually beneficial relationships between the executive and legislative branches of government.

As Members, we have the opportunity to meet these experts and benefit from their insight, knowledge and experience. One such expert in my office just celebrated 26 years of service to the USDA Forest Service. Kenneth Karkula is currently serving a 1-year fellowship in my office through the Brookings Institute. Building on his extensive experience, he has made invaluable contributions to several issues important to Idaho in the area of natural resources, the environment and energy. In the short time since his arrival, he has become an invaluable asset to my staff, filling in during recent permanent staff vacancies and being willing to do whatever is asked of him.

Ken is on detail from his position as National Concessions Program Manager for the Forest Service. His public service career started when he fought wildland fires in the late 1970s to the mid-1980s. He then served as a District Resource Staff Officer in Arizona and New Mexico and, in 1992, moved to the position of Forest Recreation Staff Officer in Lake Tahoe, CA. In 1996, he took his current position at the USDA Forest Service Headquarters, a tremendous culmination of many hard-working years. Ken's knowledge of U.S. environmental and Federal land management policies, coupled with his experience in on-the-ground implementation of these policies over the years, gives him a unique and critical perspective of Federal land management issues that benefit me as I help explore updating and enhancing decades-old environmental policies and practices.

I congratulate Ken on his many years of successful work and dedication to the American public.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS

IN RECOGNITION OF THE NEW ISLAMIC CENTER OF AMERICA

• Mr. LEVIN. Mr. President, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to The Islamic Center of America, one of the first Islamic institutions in North America. On May 12, the Center will celebrate the completion of its new mosque complex in Dearborn, which will have the distinction of being the largest mosque in the United States. The festivities will continue with a grand banquet to be held on May 14. These events will bring together Muslims, as well as many others, from Michigan and around the country.

The Islamic Center of America traces its origin to the 1940s when Muslim immigrants from Lebanon and Syria began settling in Detroit and thus sought to bring a religious leader from the Middle East to the Detroit area to serve their community. A young author and scholar, Imam Mohammed Jawas Chirri, was the choice, arriving from Lebanon in February 1949. When the newly-formed Islamic Center Foundation Society was established in 1954, Imam Chirri became its new leader and soon after they decided to build a new religious center.

In his efforts to raise funds for the new center, Imam Chirri visited Egypt in 1959 and successfully secured support for the project. The Society purchased land owned by the Ford Motor Company located on Joy Road and Greenfield in Detroit. On September 20, 1963, the Islamic Center of America first opened its doors. The building consisted of a large domed prayer room, lecture hall, kitchen, offices, and two classrooms. Following the opening of the mosque, families of the Islamic Center began to move into the area. By 1967, the Center had already outgrown